

Ref: RM-10765

I am in support of the Data Widecast proposal. The basis of the proposal is that a volunteer organization is proactively offering to provide constant and timely communications to the general public. During the recent power blackout in the Northeast US, the only government radio service that was operational was the National Weather Service forecast station. And, while most of us were wondering if we were victims of terrorism, the NWS continued to broadcast weather reports. The Widecast organization would have immediately reacted and advised the public of what was going on (by assimilating available information from other sources, such as the Internet, commercial broadcasters outside of the blackout area, and so on). This proposed service will not cost the taxpayer (or the government) one penny, yet it will fulfill an urgent need for reliable and independent information availability.

John Hart